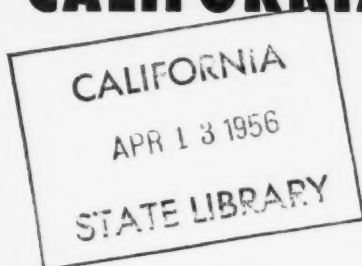


# BULLETIN

## SCHOOL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA



**VOLUME 27, NUMBER 3**

**MARCH, 1956**

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# BULLETIN

## OF THE SCHOOL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA

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March, 1956

Volume 27, No. 3

### CONTENTS

Meetings and Events for 1956.....	2
Invitation to join SLAC.....	2
Officers and Committee Chairmen.....	3, 4
The Alchemy of Books— <i>Dr. Lawrence Clark Powell</i> .....	5
Notable Books of 1955.....	13
Why Read Books— <i>Marchette Chute</i> .....	17
Adult Books for Young People.....	20
Wanted: Browsers and Fun Readers— <i>Marion D. Harris</i> .....	21
ALA Basic Books.....	23
Just the Facts . . . ..	24
State Senators and Assemblymen for 1956.....	25
AVEAC-SLAC Joint Meeting in Sacramento.....	27
Summer Schools and Workshops.....	29, 31, 32
SLANC at San Jose.....	30
Los Angeles Career Conference.....	31

The Bulletin of the School Library Association is published quarterly, in November, January, March and May by the Association, at Ashbury and Eureka Streets, El Cerrito, California.

Subscription rates: \$1.75 a year to non-members. Single copies, 50 cents. Membership dues are \$2.50, of which \$1.00 is for a subscription to the Bulletin.

Views expressed in this publication are not necessarily endorsed by the Association.

Re-entered as second class matter at the Post Office at Richmond, California.

## SOUTHERN SECTION

**Date:** April 14, 1956  
**Place:** University of Southern California  
**Topic:** Careers in Libraries  
**Leader:** Bill Eshelman

### SPRING MEETING

**Date:** May 5, 1956  
**Place:** To be announced

## NORTHERN SECTION

**Date:** April 14, 1956  
**Place:** San Jose State College  
**Topic:** Joint meeting with Student Library Association  
**Leader:** Miss Dora Smith

### SPRING MEETING

**Date:** May 12, 1956  
**Place:** Modesto  
**Topic:** Annual Business Meeting  
**Leader:** Ida May Edwards

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## AN INVITATION TO JOIN THE SCHOOL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA

I herewith transmit my annual membership dues of \$2.50 in the SCHOOL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA ☐ SOUTHERN ☐ NORTHERN SECTION, for the year July 1, 1955, to June 30, 1956, \$1.00 of which is for a subscription to the BULLETIN OF THE SCHOOL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA for one year.

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## THE ALCHEMY OF BOOKS<sup>1</sup>

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The title of my talk is a concession to those who believe that librarianship is a science. I do not believe that it is, was, or ever will be a science. To me librarianship lies somewhere between art and craft—it is an artful craft, say, or a crafty art—a black art I sometimes think, when I lose my way in the maze of a large card catalog. Still this is an age of science—of scientific fission and science fiction—and the keynote speaker at a national library conference should not forget it, lest he be gaveled down as a quaint antiquarian. And so my title is at least semi-scientific. It is true that Alchemy is a dead science, having been succeeded by Chemistry toward the end of the seventeenth century; thus there should be nothing controversial about my choice, and very few (if any) alchemists in the audience.

Now if I am willing to go so far as to poke fun at those who would transform librarianship from an art to a science, there are nevertheless a few things I hold sacred. The first of these is the alphabet, as traditionally arranged from A to Z. The other is the dictionary. What single book would one choose to be cast away with on a desert island? My choice would be Webster's Unabridged, that great mother of books, that matrix from which one man delivers a *Finnegans Wake*, another a *Shropshire Lad*. What a glorious prospect—to be alone on an island, with an opportunity to sit back against a banana tree, and read all the way from aardvark to zymurgy!

This dithyramb to the dictionary is merely my way of introducing Webster's definition of alchemy. If you would argue with me, said Voltaire, first define your terms. Alchemy is, primarily, the medieval

chemical science, the great objects of which were to transmute base metals into gold and to discover the cure for diseases, and means of indefinitely prolonging life. Faust and Paracelsus and Merlin were alchemists. The origin of the word is uncertain. It probably comes from the Greek *chymeia*—a mingling. It is Webster's secondary definition of alchemy that is my real text tonight: *the power to transform something common into something precious*.

Books, I say, are truly alchemical agents; for they, more than any other of man's creations, have the power of transforming something common (meaning you and me as we are most of time) into something previous (meaning you and me as God meant us to be). Both the physical book, in its format of print and binding, and the essential book, in what its words say and mean, by tones and overtones, have this power in a measure unknown to any other of the so-called library media. I speak tonight in praise of the book as artifact and of the book as symbol. For half a millennium the book has been accumulating a power which it alone has today. A good book bears at once the bloom of youth and the patina of age. Perhaps there are those laboratory technicians who love the sight and smell of that inflammable substitute called the microfilm. I know that my book-loving art librarian at UCLA is also thrilled by the sight of a slide collection, and a battery of televisions would raise Skip Graham's blood pressure—bless that dynamic Kentucky librarian—but for me books are basic, are alchemical, and my talk tonight is aimed to convince you of this truth.

I cannot demonstrate this truth in any scientific way. I am no scientist—no book-

<sup>1</sup>An address to the American Library Association, New York, 1952.

man in the Mort'Adlerian sense. I have yet to learn how to read a book, except that unlike my wife, who always begins every book at the back and reads forward, I do believe in starting on page one, then doing what comes naturally.

I can speak only in a very personal way about this power of books to transform, with examples from my own experience. I offer myself as a case history of the alchemy of books. And I am here tonight, celebrating this fiscal New Year's Eve, because books have changed my life. I owe so much to them—friends, travels, economic status—really everything. And the more I see of books, the more I read and touch and share them with others, the more I love them. I can't help it; I make no apology for it. I am just a simple bookman—some might call me a bibliosimpleton—one who is nevertheless suspicious of those who speak so glibly about non-book materials. The next thing will be a library school for non-book librarians. This summer's institute at the Chicago Graduate Library School, called "A Conference on the Communication of Specialized Information," points in this direction, and is another instance of this school's sensitivity to trends. The concluding paper in the conference will be the "Emergence of a New Institutional Structure for the Dissemination of Specialized Information."

It seems to me that this trend leads to the elimination of the so bothersome human element in librarianship. I am no H. G. Wells, no Aldous Huxley, but I can envision a windowless warehouse neatly stocked with non-book materials, all under the strictest bibliographical control, the turbulent flow brought to auddled halt, serviced by non-human selectors, and used by an elite clientele of photomats. Complete efficiency, complete sterility.

I do not deplore this trend; I simply do not like it. I know that I am not alone

in the profession in my fundamentalist belief in the basic importance of books. Perhaps we are a minority. If so, let us be a militant one. In my short career of sixteen years in librarianship I have been too busy learning, to leave any time for teaching. Now I confess to feeling differently. I keep looking in vain to our library schools for leadership in a philosophy of librarianship as a bookish art. Perhaps a new and reactionary library school could ride to fame on a curriculum of three basic courses—and here again I am trying to speak with bibliosimplicity—three basic courses, I repeat: (1) The Reading of Books, (2) The Collecting and Arrangement of Books, (3) The Service of Books to People. I realize, of course, that no university would ever permit such courses to be numbered simply Librarianship 1, 2, and 3; but they could be designed as Librarianship 199, 202b and 397x.

If I thought I were a lone voice crying in a non-book wilderness I would quit librarianship for my first love of book-selling. But I am not alone. From the many talks I have given and essays I have written during the past decade, mostly in praise of books, I have had a heartwarming response from all kinds of librarians all over the world. Let us admit it though, things are bad for books and bookish people. Mass entertainment, distortions of television and movies, the pulps and the slicks, censorship, war, and the even more ruinous rush toward conformity and standardization—all of these things make the reading of an honest book seem to some an act of extreme courage, if not downright treason.

Yes, things are bad for books. They've always been bad though, ever since the disaster which overtook Ptolemy Philadelphus' great library in Alexandria, whose librarian was the poet Callimachus. The enemies of books have never stopped marching. But books are not dead things,

as Milton declared in majestic style; they are as tough and as lasting as man himself. Yet they stand so patiently on shelves waiting, for generations sometimes, for a man to reach out and take them and read them, be taught and inspired and moved by them. That bond which is established between a man and a book, by which power flows into the reader and sometimes changes the world, is one of the great potencies of our work. Perhaps the greatest of all images of it is that of the young Lincoln, lying flat on the cabin floor, reading Blackstone by firelight.

This is the sentimental folklore of librarianship, I hear someone say. Of course it is. In our bowing down to the false gods of Chrome, Cellophane, and Chlorophyll, let us not forget the true divinities of librarianship, whose faraway river gods who rose from the water and blessed bookmen with papyrus and other durables more lasting than woodpulp.

What can a true believer do to combat the heathen who would minimize books? Be firm in one's belief, be a reader and a collector of books, even if only of reprints, recruit like believers to the profession, and make one's library a bookish place by participation in such programs as the American Heritage.

Recently I made a first visit to the University of Virginia and discovered the Alderman Library—the university library built by Harry Clemons and now headed by Jack Dalton. Until then my first choice of academic libraries which invite reading by accessible and comfortable arrangement, had been the undergraduate Lamont Library at Harvard, with the Princeton Library a close second. Now on the Virginia campus so graciously designed by Jefferson I found a spacious building, open throughout to students from early morn till late at night, with soft chairs placed seductively beside shelves of newly received books. Nothing new or radical

about this, at least not in the United States where the library's primary function is to serve the living.

After the ardors of day-long meetings I was glad to relax in one of the Alderman's easy chairs and reach for a book. It was Ezra Pound's *Letters*, a coruscating volume of basic importance in modern literature. My eye was taken not only by the letters alone, but also by the bookplate in the volume—an unusual *ex libris* in that it was a prose tribute, set in small type, to the memory of a Virginia professor who had died in 1949 at the early age of 34. His great interest had been contemporary literature, and in his memory a fund had been established by his family to buy modern books. His name was Peters Rushton. Let me read from the bookplate:

His achievements were extraordinary for so young a man, but naming them can do little to suggest those personal qualities which made his teaching a rare stimulus, his conversation a delight, and his friendship a constant renewal of faith. No one could know him without feeling himself a better man for having been close to virtue and wisdom and courage. Wherever wit, vigor of mind and human understanding are valued among living men, he will be of their fellowship.

Reading there, that rainy night in the Alderman Library, with the shade of that great bookman, and administrator, Thomas Jefferson, at my shoulder, I felt once again the profound alchemical power of books, working deep into my very bones, whereby I was brought into communion with other bookmen who, though dead, were more living at that moment than the flesh and blood students and staff around me. And that, I say to you, is one of the great rewards of our work as librarians: that sense of identification we can feel with men of all times, if we are sensitive and not crushed under the mass of

our own media. Ezra Pound says it memorably in the preface to *The Spirit of Romance*:

It is dawn at Jerusalem while midnight hovers above the Pillars of Hercules. All ages are contemporaneous. It is B.C., let us say, in Morocco. The Middle Ages are in Russia. The future stirs already in the minds of the few. This is especially true of literature, where the real time is independent of the apparent, and where many dead men are our grandchildren's contemporaries, while many of our contemporaries have been already gathered into Abraham's bosom, or some more fitting receptacle.

When I come to Manhattan, as I do once or twice a year, I always feel that Melville is more alive for me than most of the men around me, that Whitman has more enduring vitality than any floor show in town. Just a century ago Melville was alive in the flesh, here on his native island, seeing *Moby Dick* through the press, poised at the zenith of his creative arc, transformed by the power of books into an archangel, communing ecstatically with his friend Hawthorne. It was to Hawthorne that *Moby Dick* was dedicated and when the older man responded to it, Melville wrote him in return:

Your letter was handed me last night on the road going to Mr. Morewood's, and I read it here. Had I been at home, I would have sat down at once and answered it. In me divine magnanimities are spontaneous and instantaneous—catch them while you can. The world goes round, and the other side comes up. So now I can't write what I felt. But I felt pantheistic then—your heart beat in my ribs and mine in yours, and both in God's. A sense of unspeakable security is in me this moment, on account of your having understood the book. I have written a wicked book, and feel spotless as the lamb. Ineffable socialities are in me. I would sit down

and dine with you and all the gods in old Rome's Pantheon.

Why is it that nomonument to Melville stands here in Manhattan, where he was born and died? Let one be built to stand on the Battery, a monument in water-created limestone, containing a profusion of whales and books and Polynesian maidens. And let the ALA provide it.

Two years ago this summer I shipped out of this city, not before the mast as Melville did, but on an E-Z-rest mattress in the *Queen Elizabeth*, bound on a year's bookhunting in the British Isles. Throughout months of gastronomic despair, I was comforted by my wife's culinary skill, as she proved herself no mean reader—of ration books. Melville, too, was with me all year, for he also was a man who hunted books for love of them, seeing them both as symbols of mortality and as tangibles of learning.

In Oxford I was particularly moved by the bookish richness of Christ Church, the heart of which is Doctor Fell's great quadrangle. Christ Church was the college of Burton, of Evelyn, and of Professor Dodgson who wrote *Alice in Wonderland* during the 45-year tenancy of bachelor's quarters on the quadrangle.

I took my wife to see it one day in spring, and we arrived as the late afternoon sun was alchemizing Cotswold limestone to pure gold. The sun-thirsty stone was warm to the touch of our hands. Slowly, arm in arm, we turned the square and sauntered on past Merton College to the public gardens, across the High Street from Magdalen College where Oscar Wilde commenced his long fall from grace. For three hundred years those Oxford gardens have been planted, tended, and peopled. The warm air was heady with herb scents, as bees raced for honey. Townspeople lazed on the sunny grass. We looked beyond to Christ Church meadow where under candle-blossomed

chestnut trees brown cows browsed among buttercups. Later we made our way to the Mitre for tea, as the High Street brimmed with bicycles.

I had with me a volume of Melville in excerpt and that night before going to sleep I was browsing in the entries from the journal he kept on his trip abroad in 1857. My dozing wife was startled when I cried, "Listen to this!" and read from Melville's entry made at Oxford on May 2, 1857:

At 11½ arrived at Oxford.—Most interesting spot I have seen in England. Made tour of all colleges. It was here I first confessed with gratitude my mother land, and hailed her with pride. Oxford to Americans as well worth visiting as Paris, tho' in a very different way. Garden girdled by river.—Meadows beyond. Oxen and sheep. Pastoral and collegiate life blended.—Christ Church Meadow. Avenue of trees.—Old reef washed by waves and showing detached parts—so Oxford. Catching rheumatism in Oxford cloisters different from catching it in Rome. Learning lodged like a faun. Garden to every college. Lands for centuries never molested by labor. Sacred to beauty and tranquility. Fell's avenues. Has beheld unstirred all the violence of revolutions, etc. Staircase of Christ Church. Each college has dining room and chapel—Soul and body equally cared for.—Grass smooth as green baize of billard table.—I know nothing more fitted by mild and beautiful rebuke to chastise the presumptuous ranting of Yankees.—In such a retreat old Burton sedately smiled at men.

What a rich year that was! From Lands End to Scotland, from London to Liverpool and across to Dublin, in big shops and little shops and in open-air stalls and barrows, in all kinds of weather (mostly wet), I did wholesale collecting of seven-

teenth-century English books—that century in which our language reached its richest development at the hands of Shakespeare, the King James translators, Milton, Bunyan, Dryden, Sir Thomas Browne, and "Melancholy" Burton.

The great transitional figure between alchemy and chemistry was Robert Boyle, called the "father of chemistry." The rare first edition of his masterpiece *The Skeptical Chymist*, 1661, eluded me, but I did dig out many other books by Boyle and earlier alchemists and mystics. I even turned up a book, published in 1681, describing a seventeenth-century pressure cooker. It was Boyle's French collaborator, the inventor named Denis Papin, and is called *A New Digester or Engine for Softening Bones, with an account of the Price a good big Engine will cost and of the Profit it will afford*.

Once upon a time I believed in perfection and set an impossibly high standard for myself and others. Gradually I had to lower it, when I realized that I could never free my own work from error. That year in England I made one enormous error which depressed my standard even more.

In seeking to complete our library's holdings of the British Parliamentary Journals, I had with me two lists, one of what our holdings already were, and one of what volumes were needed to complete the set. It is an enormous set of many hundred of folio volumes, of which UCLA had about half.

After great searching our London agent located a single complete set which the owner agreed to break. He called me one morning, with as much excitement as an Englishman ever permits himself, and reported that with the help of a very large moving van he had transported the volumes we needed to his shop, and would I come right away and approve them.

So away I went by bus from Chelsea

to Chancery Lane and found our agent and his staff out on the sidewalk to make room for the Parliamentary Journals. There they were, those monstrous folios, piled throughout the shop, on the floor and on the stairs, in basement and loft. I looked at a volume or two. Somehow the dates were familiar. A vicious seed of doubt began to sprout. I grew hot, then cold. I took out my list of what the library already had and what it needed. I did some checking, all the while my agent hovered near, with discreet remarks on the effort he had expended in rounding up the elephantine shipment.

Then he paused and said, "You're white as a ghost. Aren't you feeling well?"

"There's something wrong," I said, sinking down on one of the stacks of Journals. "There's something horribly wrong."

The man looked puzzled.

"These are the wrong volumes," I said. "These are the half of the set UCLA already has!"

Then it was the Englishman who turned white, and I suggested that we adjourn to the neighboring pub and talk things over.

Somehow, with the aid of more than one serving of gin and bitters, I persuaded that good man to haul my bitter mistake back to where he got it, exchange them for the proper volumes and ship them off to their new home in the Far West.

Since then there is really no mistake I wouldn't forgive my staff.

I went on a digging operation to the Kentish town of Tunbridge Wells, a once fashionable spa whose medicinal water still flows from the ancient Roman spring and costs only a penny a glass. It lies some forty miles south of London, and I headed for it in my car one rainy morning in early spring. The lustful prospect

of sacking a provincial bookshop sustained me as I ran the gauntlet of South London traffic. Not only are the streets of South London crooked and curved, they are also narrow and crazily intersected; they are crowded with lorries, motors, bicycles, pushcarts, barrows, trams and prams, and worse—every last vehicle was going hell-bent down the wrong side of the road.

No wonder I pulled in to a roadside stand halfway to Tunbridge and broke tradition by having tea instead of coffee at eleven. The English can blame many of their ills on other people; their cooking is their fault alone. Rationing is a blessing in disguise, for it reduces the amount of raw foodstuffs an English cook can ruin in the course of a year. Their tea I liked. Thanks to tea I survived the English winter, and cooking which knows neither season nor seasoning.

Hot tea comforted me that day in an unheated bookshop. Out of its cellar I dredged a collection of European maps of the period 1750-1820, the former reference collection of the British Ambassador to France after Waterloo, and including the great Cassini map of France, the first map of any country done from scientific specifications. All of these several hundred linen-mounted maps were contained in morocco boxes bearing the gilt Stuart de Rothesay arms, and I lost no time in sending them over the sea route to California. Toward the end of the afternoon in that cold Tunbridge shop I was working through the bookshelves on the mezzanine, about ready to call it a day. I was tired and inclined to pass over the lowest shelf in the last case; the light was poor and the floor too dirty to crawl on. In addition to the great collection of eighteenth-century maps I had made a rich haul of books. And so I started down the stairs when suddenly my fingertips began to tingle. My bibliogeiger-counter was working. I hurried



back upstairs to the one case I had not combed, got down on my knees, and found my hand magnetically drawn to a single octavo volume. I took it over to the window and looked at the title-page. My heart jumped. "*Signatura Rerum*," I read, "*or the Signature of all Things, shewing the Sign, the Signification of the severall forms and shapes in the Creation: and what the beginning, ruin, and cure of every Thing is; it proceeds out of Eternity into Time, and again out Time into Eternity, and comprizeth all Mysteries.*" Printed by John Macock for Gyles Calvert, at the Black Spread Eagle, at the West End of Paul's Church, it was the first English translation of Jakob Boehme's alchemical work, first published in 1622.

I drove back to London through twilight rain with the book on the seat beside me. *Signatura Rerum*—the Signature of All Things. Why was I so excited about it? It was not for the pregnant title alone, or because of an interest in alchemy, or that I collected its author, the shoemaker-philosopher-mystic whose work had a profound effect on the English Quakers, and on Newton and Locke. No, it was because I had found, almost by magic, a three-hundred-year-old edition of a book which gave title to a volume of poems by a modern American poet, whom I also know as a friend. Here was the key to Kenneth Rexroth's *The Signature of all Things*, published by New Directions in 1949, and printed by Hans Mardersteig in Verona, Italy: one of the most simply beautiful books of the twentieth century.

Buying Boehme's books transported me from England or that also sea-begirt city of San Francisco where Rexroth lives. Instead of traversing the Weald of Kent, I was back in my home state, talking books with Kenneth Rexroth in his book-filled flat on Eighth Street, pausing to devour a mushroom omelette stirred up at high noon by this poet who can also

cook, all the while his baby daughter read a book in her playpen in the corner of the room. I thought of the morning at UCLA when Rexroth performed one of the noblest acts ever done by a poet: came to an eight o'clock class and read his own work to the students, and to our equally attentive wire-recorder.

Kenneth Rexroth—one of the most fiercely individualistic, uncompromising, outspoken Americans of our time; poet, dramatist, critic, mountain-climber, Guggenheim Fellow, and passionate bookman. It was a mutual love of books that brought us together. All the forty miles back to London the affectionate thought of him alchemized a hard drive into a joyful journey. Let me read the first stanza of the title poem from his *The Signature of All Things*, which has its setting in the Coast Range of California:

My head and shoulders, and my book  
In the cool shade, and my body  
Stretched bathing in the sun, I lie  
Reading beside the waterfall—  
Boehme's Signature of All Things.  
Through the deep July day the leaves  
Of the laurel, all the colors  
Of gold, spin down through the moving  
Deep laurel shade all day. They float  
On the mirrored sky and forest  
For a while, and then, still slowly  
Spinning, sink through the crystal deep  
Of the pool to its leaf gold floor.  
The saint saw the world as streaming  
In the electrolysis of love.  
I put him by and gaze through shade  
Folded into shade of slender  
Laurel trunks and leaves filled with sun.  
The wren broods in her mossdomed  
nest.  
A newt struggles with a white moth  
Drowning in the pool. The hawks  
scream,  
Playing together on the ceiling  
O heaven. The long hours go by.  
I think of those who have loved me,  
Of all the mountains I have climbed,

Of all the seas I have swum in.  
The evil of the world sinks.  
My own sin and trouble fall away  
Like Christian's bundle, and I watch  
My forty summers fall like falling  
Leaves and falling water held  
Eternally in summer air.

It is this ever-living nature of literature that is one of the deepest joys of librarianship. In the world of books which we inhabit, time is meaningless, and the three hundred years between the Signatures of Jakob Boehme and Kenneth Rexroth contract into an hour. And it *is* true, books *are* great alchemists, filled with the power to transform something common into something precious. Time and again, through all the years since my childhood, at home and abroad, on sea and earth and in the sky, in library reading rooms all the way from the South Pasadena Public Library to the British Museum, I have observed the working of this simple truth, this great truth. To us, their companions for awhile, books transmit this alchemical power, that we may pass it on to those who enter our great lion-guarded buildings, our humble branches in southern mountains, central plains, and western deserts, yes, even our bookmobiles.

If we accept this truth and its priest-like obligation, how can we fail to be dedicated persons, discriminating in what we do with the precious little time of life that is ours, choosing the good and the true, from among the cheap and the false which waylay us on all sides? We

should never fail to express our affection for those living writers, such as Rexroth, and to buy the small editions of their unpopular books, remembering what Melville said of Hawthorne, "Give not over to future generations the glad duty of acknowledging him for what he is. Take that joy to yourself in your own generation; and so shall he feel those grateful impulses on him, that may possibly prompt him to the full flower of some still greater achievement in your eyes. And by confessing him you thereby confess others; you brace the whole brotherhood. For genius, all over the world, stands hand in hand, and one shock of recognition runs the whole circle round."

In spite of our alchemy, ruin 'waits all mortal things, even the towers of Manhattan. Yet my book lasts longer than my beloved. Let us then be both proud and humble in the practice of our art, for it is an ancient art, a noble art, which serves man in all that he does and would do. It is the art of librarianship in which, I say to you in closing, books are basic.

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The University of California School of Librarianship is attempting to secure a grant from the Fund for the Republic for a study on whether or not censorship pressures are being exerted on California libraries. The Executive Boards of CLA and SLAC both have voted to endorse this project and to cooperate in accomplishing it.



## NOTABLE BOOKS OF 1955

The Public Libraries Division of the American Library Association has issued its annual list of "Notable Books" which includes 46 titles.

Mildred W. Sandoe, personnel director, Public Library, Cincinnati, Ohio, who is President of the division, said of the list:

"When we hear so often that mediocrity reigns supreme—that whether we realize it or not we are subject to the 'tyranny of the average'—librarians are offering to each other, and to their patrons, an increasingly important service as they call attention to books that are truly notable. Unhampered by commercial restrictions and striving to recognize intellectual integrity, members of the Notable Books Council and the participating libraries have endeavored to select wisely and well."

Mrs. Florence S. Craig, director of adult education, Cuyahoga County Public Library, Cleveland, Ohio, Chairman of the Council, said:

"The books were chosen for these factors: sincerity and honesty of presentation, factual correctness, literary excellence, contribution to man's understanding of himself and the times in which he lives.

"Omitted were new editions, condensations, compilations and titles that were parts of older and larger works.

"Fifty-five libraries participated in the project during 1955."

Following is the list:

### NOTABLE BOOKS OF 1955

Allen, G. W., *Solitary Singer*, Macmillan. A well-balanced interpretation of Whitman, poet, scholar and human being.

Anderson, Erica, *World of Albert Schweitzer*, Harper. A vivid picture record of a great man and the worlds in which he lives.

Barth, Alan, *Government by Investigation*, Viking. The importance to good government of legislative investigation and some dangers in abuse of this power, evaluated with fairness.

Bates, Marston, *Prevalence of People*, Scribner. World population from the broad point of view of the various sciences.

Bishop, J. A., *The Day Lincoln Was Shot*, Harper. An effective "You Are There" account of what happened on the day and night of April 14, 1865.

Bourlière, François, *Mammals of the World, Their Life and Habits*, Knopf. Outstanding presentation in text and photographs of animals in their natural habitat.

Bowles, Chester, *New Dimensions of Peace*, Harper. A review of the international scene in Europe and Asia by a competent, practical observer who has vital ideas about United States foreign policies.

Bridgeman, William, *The Lonely Sky*, Henry Holt. An enthralling account of supersonic flight at fifteen miles above the earth.

Burrows, Millar, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, Viking. A scholarly analysis of what many theologians and scientists believe to be one of the great discoveries of our time.

Carson, Rachel, *The Edge of the Sea*, Houghton Mifflin. A beautifully written and scientifically correct study of the strange and abundant life between high and low tides.

Chase, Gilbert, *America's Music from the Pilgrims to the Present*, McGraw-Hill. Provocative panorama of our democratic musical heritage.

Chase, M. E., *Life and Language in the Old Testament*, W. W. Norton. An invaluable consideration of the Old Testament as a work of literary art and a keen analysis of the mind of an ancient Oriental people.

Clifford, J. L., *Young Sam Johnson*, McGraw-Hill. What made young Johnson the boy he was and the famous man he became.

Davenport, R. W., *The Dignity of Man*, Harper. About the central conflicts of our time which may be neither economic nor political but philosophic.

De Santillana, George, *The Crime of Galileo*, University of Chicago. About Galileo and his inquisitors, who felt that the best way to defend the faith was to become policemen of the mind.

De Voto, Bernard, *The Easy Chair*, Houghton Mifflin. Thoughtful comments by the late editor of *The Easy Chair* (Harper's Magazine) on important issues in American life.

- Fine, Benjamin, *1,000,000 Delinquents*. World. Personal interviews and case studies on juvenile delinquency. The author documents causes in home, school and community and suggests preventive measures.
- Fromm, Erich, *The Sane Society*. Rinehart. A challenge to all who assume that social and economic processes must be sane because they exist.
- Goodenough, E. R., *Toward a Mature Faith*, Prentice-Hall. An original solution for the lost faith and security men are seeking.
- Gunther, John, *Inside Africa*. Harper. Despite some errors and some superficiality, an important compendium of knowledge about a vital area.
- Hachiya, Michihiko, *Hiroshima Diary*. University of North Carolina Press. A participant's account of the atom bombing of Hiroshima which is objective and scientific.
- Hanson, Lawrence, *Noble Savage*. Random. A richly detailed biography of Gauguin, a successful French stockbroker who became one of the world's most colorful artists.
- Herberg, Will, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, Doubleday. A critical, sensitive and impartial study of the religious situation in America.
- Hoyle, Fred, *Frontiers of Astronomy*, Harper. Controversial implications of the new ideas in astronomy.
- Irvine, William, *Apes, Angels and Victorians*, McGraw-Hill. A skillful blending of information and humor about Charles Darwin, Thomas Henry Huxley and the impact of Darwin's theory of evolution on the 19th century world.
- Jackson, R. H., *The Supreme Court in the American System of Government*, Harvard University Press. Acute commentary on the Supreme Court and its unique function in our democracy.
- Life Magazine, *The World We Live In*, Simon and Schuster. Superbly illustrated articles about the earth and its natural wonders by the editorial staff of Life and Lincoln Barnett.
- Lindbergh, A. M., *Gift from the Sea*, Pantheon. In poetic prose the author describes her search for inner peace while living in "a world that is too much with us."
- Luethy, Herbert, *France Against Herself*, Frederick A. Praeger. A Swiss journalist's well-informed study of France's appalling problems.
- MacGowan, Kenneth, *The Living Stage*. Prentice-Hall. A well-written, well-illustrated history of the theatre from its origins with primitive man though its dark and golden ages.
- Markandaya, Kamala (pseud.), *Nectar in a Sieve*, John Day. Realistic novel of Indian peasant life which is sad and tender and contains emotional universals the world can understand.
- Millar, G. R., *Crossbowman's Story of the First Exploration of the Amazon*. Knopf. Fictionized biography of explorer Orellana and his trip from Peru down the Amazon to the Atlantic.
- New York (City) Museum of Modern Art, *The Family of Man*, Simon and Schuster. Excellent reproduction of photographs from an exhibit prepared by Edward Steichen at New York's Museum of Modern Art showing "the universal elements and emotions in the 'everydayness' of life."
- Niebuhr, Reinhold, *The Self and the Dramas of History*, Scribner. An analysis of the impact upon western civilization of the tensions between the Hebraic and Hellenic elements of culture.
- Oldenbourg, Zoe, *The Cornerstone*. Pantheon. The cornerstone is Christianity on which real and believable characters are able to build in different ways.
- Peterson, R. T., *Wild America*, Houghton Mifflin. Wild America as seen through the highly perceptive observations of American naturalist Peterson and British naturalist James Fisher.
- Phillips, Wendell, *Qataban and Sheba*, Harcourt. Fascinating account of archeological treasure hunting in the ancient kingdoms on the Biblical spice routes of Arabia.
- Reischauer, E. O., *Wanted: an Asian Policy*. Knopf. A readable diagnosis of our problems in Asia.
- Tenzing Norgay, *Tiger of the Snows*. G. P. Putnam's Sons. In collaboration with James Ramsey Ullman, Tenzing Norgay, the Sherpa, tells his very original version of the successful ascent of Mount Everest in 1953.
- Trilling, Lionel, *The Opposing Self*. Viking. Distinguished literary essays with an interconnecting theme, "the idea of the self."
- Tunnard, Christopher, *American Skyline*. Houghton Mifflin. An unusually fine presentation of city planning, architectural tradition and industrial progress of the American city.

Van der Post, Laurens, *The Dark Eye in Africa*, William Morrow. An Afrikaner's stirring discussion of his country's spiritual problems.

Walker, R. L., *China Under Communism*, Yale University Press. Well-based in research, this analysis of communism's impact upon China is a serious attempt to sift and interpret actual publications of the Peking regime.

Weeks, Edward, *The Open Heart*, Little, Brown. Out of the life and thought of the long-time editor of the Atlantic Monthly comes a philosophy of life beautifully written.

West, Rebecca, *A Train of Powder*, Viking. Six essays on guilt and punishment by a master writer-reporter.

White, Walter, *How Far the Promised Land?* Viking. America's progress in race relations and a measure of the man who devoted his life to bringing the Negro toward full equality in our society.

## AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL LIBRARIANS

The American Association of School Librarians will meet in Miami Beach, Florida, June 17-23, during the 75th Annual Conference of the American Library Association.

Headquarters for the Conference will be the Fountainbleau Hotel. Reservations may be made through the American Library Association Housing Bureau, P.O. Box 1511, Miami Beach, Florida.

Mrs. Betty S. Lunnon, coordinator of libraries for the Dade County public schools, and Mrs. Lois M. Pilson, librarian at Miami Shores Elementary School, are local co-chairmen for the school librarians association.

A Sunday evening cruise on Biscayne Bay, tours of elementary, junior, and senior high schools in the Greater Miami area, and a State Assembly breakfast are being planned.

A joint meeting of school librarians with the Division of Librarians for Children and Young People from the public library group will have as guest speaker Miss Jessamyn West, a well-known writer of stories about and for young people. A workshop with the theme, "Let's Talk About Binding," is being co-sponsored by these groups.

A Hospitality Center will be maintained during the Conference by the school librarians' association at the Eden Roc Hotel near headquarters.

In addition, an instructional materials workshop will be held under the direction of Dr. Louis Shores, dean of the Library School at Florida State University. Dr. Joe Hall, Associate Superintendent for the Dade County public schools, will deliver the keynote address for the workshop.

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## WHY READ BOOKS?

MARCHETTE CHUTE

The American people possess something that no one ever had before in the history of the world. They possess what are called the mass media of communication—television, radio, films, magazines and newspapers—and with these they are influenced and entertained on a huge scale. For the mass media count their audiences by the millions and are run by experts who know how to use them effectively.

In a country dominated by these new techniques, which are beginning to be used even in the schools, many people are wondering if the old method of communication—the book—is not a little slow and old fashioned. It has remained unchanged since the days of tallow candles and horse-drawn wagons, and perhaps it is out-of-date in these days of electricity, with atomic energy itself just around the corner. Can we do better with these other media and leave books as a harmless hobby for scholars?

No, we can't. And the question is fundamental not only to American education and American entertainment but also to the whole conception of American government.

It is the custom today to count Americans by grouping them in the millions. Millions do this and millions do that, whether it is television surveys or insurance tables or buying toothpaste. Nevertheless, the whole strength of the country lies in the fact that we do not really count ourselves that way. We count one by one. Each American is an individual, not a part of a predictable mass. Everything in our heritage of Anglo-Saxon law, of Jewish and Christian ethics and the whole movement and history of the

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*In answering the question "Why Read Books?" author Marchette Chute identifies the role of the book in our mass, technological society. Among the many books written by Miss Chute are Ben Jonson of Westminster, Shakespeare of London, and Geoffrey Chaucer of England. Miss Chute is a member of the National Book Committee.*

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American continent is opposed to the notion of grouping people into collections. They are individuals and they remain so, and in that lies their value not only to themselves but to their country.

### Books and the Mass Media

Of all the arts of communication, the book is the one that goes straight for the individual. It is not tailored to a group audience, the product of many minds and speaking to many minds. It is the single individual speaking to the single individual, and in a voice that does not need to be raised because it is not shouting for attention.

By their very nature, the mass media must attract a great many people simultaneously. If they tell the truth it must be simplified, since a lot of people must understand it; and it must be a pleasant truth, since large groups of people will not pay to be made uncomfortable. But a book can content itself with a few thousand readers, and tell them the truth as it appears to a single, honest, responsible individual. Then it can wait for the rest of its readers. It can even wait generations if need be, for a good book is in no hurry.

The mass media are forever in a hurry and they must be, for tomorrow they die. They move with the speed of last summer's vacation, and the impact they make on their millions of minds passes with them. Last week's newspaper is almost unobtainable and so is last year's maga-

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zine. Few people wish to see the average television show over again or have any chance to do so, and since mechanical techniques change so quickly most old movies are unendurable. But old books gather strength, and the best of them never wear out. In fact, they have proven to be one of the most durable things ever invented by the human race.

Since a book is durable almost to the point of immortality, it is able to wait until the individual is ready for it. A child who is six years old today has lost forever the adult television shows he might have enjoyed. He has lost all the newspapers and magazines of this year he might have profited by. But the good books that were written this year will wait for him. They will wait his leisure, his coming of age, his ability to understand them. And when the time comes, there will be no difficulties in the way. All he has to do is to walk into his local bookstore or library and they will be there, waiting for him.

#### **Man's Catalogue of Knowledge**

And consider for a moment what it is that will be waiting. It is not merely the books published in one given year. It is the memory of man itself, the vast treasure of human knowledge and human delight that has been entrusted to paper since the invention of the written word. It is Homer that is waiting, Chaucer and Spinoza and Mark Twain and the Bhagavad-Gita. The book is the medium through which we are able to possess the Bible and the plays of Shakespeare, and the same medium will be as fresh and available to our children's children as it is to us. It will never go out of fashion because it was never in fashion. It is as young as a leaf and as old as the oldest tree and, next to fire, it is perhaps the luckiest thing that man ever stumbled upon.

If the book ever becomes out-of-date, it will be because we have ceased to think in words. For the book is the word in its most durable form, its best and most reliable transmitter. Lately there has been an almost incredible advance in the transmission of images, and the image has its uses. It is excellent for certain kinds of training, especially in the case of people new to that particular subject. But while it can train the eye and the hand it cannot train the mind. The image is a limited thing, controlled by its dimensions, but the book is fathomless. It calls on both the intelligence and the imagination and is capable of going just as far as the reader will let it.

#### **"Knowledge" by Absorption**

It is true that the reading of a book requires energy and attention, and the better the book the more attention it requires. It is for this reason that many people are frightened by the mere idea of reading a book and are attracted to the mass media that are so easy to absorb. Anyone can sit on his spine and stare at a television set, an action so easy that it is sometimes difficult to get the strength to rise and turn the thing off. A motion picture asks nothing more of its viewer than the price of admission, and the large popular magazines are deliberately designed to be painless to read. But a book asks a great deal. It requires intelligent, applied attention over a fairly long period of time, and a complete mastery of the skill of reading, which is by no means the easiest of the arts. It was not designed for lazy people.

Yet we Americans are not lazy. We are in many ways extremely energetic, delighting in a challenge, and if up to now we have reacted to the challenge of sports more vigorously than to the challenge of books, that may be only because we are a young nation. The delight of intellectual activity is new to us and we have not had much practice in it. And there-



fore we do not yet know how to use books as they ought to be used.

#### Short Cuts and Ignorance

In many ways the United States is the land of the short cut and the land of "now." This is not necessarily a fault in itself; but if the tendency is carried to extremes it makes for conceit and rootlessness and its end product is not knowledge but ignorance. We read millions of copies of magazines and newspapers because we like our information to be up-to-date. If we are interested in Turkey, for instance, we want to know what is happening in Turkey this minute and to know it as easily as possible. So we read the short, lively bits of information in magazines and newspapers and they answer the question *What* very well. But they cannot answer *How* or *Why*. The answers to that demand background knowledge. They have a deep root, and the mass media are not interested in roots. So, if he really cares, the reader must turn to books again, to the source from which the writers of the articles got much of their information in the first place. The mass media of communication can confer one great gift: they can place you in the center of things. But they cannot tell you how you got there or what you ought to do about it. They cannot confer perspective and they cannot help you to gain wisdom.

All the modern media of communication are enormously useful and we are fortunate to have them. But not one of them is indispensable to the basic values of our civilization. It is books that are indispensable, those patient, portable, durable carriers of all human knowledge. They are the base upon which the workers in every other media depend, and the source of more delight, more knowledge and more power than we Americans have yet been able to realize.

## DEPT. OF LIBRARIANSHIP— SAN JOSE STATE COLLEGE

Of particular interest to school librarians and teacher-librarians is the varied program being offered by the Department of Librarianship at San Jose State College this summer. Courses include Curriculum Building Materials, Reference Books, Advanced Reference and Bibliography, Technical Processes, Principles of Librarianship, and Special Materials.

In addition to the regular teaching faculty, Mr. Leslie Janke, who was on the summer session staff last summer will join the department permanently and will be teaching courses in librarianship and in the audio-visual field as well.

For further information write Miss Dora Smith, Head, Department of Librarianship, San Jose State College, San Jose, California.

## NOTES ON THE GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE

We're all proud of being librarians and the more we can do to keep our Association and its professional work before the eyes of school administrators as well as the public the better. The Governor's Conference was on an invitational basis and SLAC was honored by having several representatives at this conference. The Section Meeting Consultants were very carefully chosen and SLAC was proud to have Mildred Brackett, Sacramento County Schools, and former president of Northern Section, SLAC, chosen as a resource person.

### HAVE YOU READ THESE?

*Budget Means Opportunity* by Joseph F. Shubert. *Wilson Bulletin*, January 1956, p. 384-7.

*Selection Policies Defined to Allay Fears of Censors* by Grace Dunkley. *Junior Libraries*, December 15, 1955, p. 3.

*Don't Let Censors Take You Unaware* by Virgil M. Rogers. *Junior Libraries*, December 15, 1955, p. 1.

## ADULT BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The Association of Young People's Librarians of the American Library Association has issued its list of "*Interesting Adult Books of 1955 for Young People.*"

Frances M. Grim, Head, Stevenson Room, Cleveland Public Library, Chairman of the Association of Young People's Librarians, stated that the Book Selection Committee makes its choice from the entire output of adult books of the year. The list has come to be watched for by librarians, high school teachers, parents and youth leaders.

Mrs. Frances M. Greene, Young Adult Librarian, Los Angeles County Public Library, Chairman of the Committee said that after 31 books had been agreed upon, the list was commented on by nineteen young people's librarians from various sections of the country before the final selection was made. She added: "Books are chosen for their appeal to young people of high school age and the late teens. The great variety of interests and abilities of young people are taken into account, as well as the readability and literary merit of the books themselves."

The list follows:

### INTERESTING ADULT BOOKS OF 1955 FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

- Aldrich, Richard, *Gertrude Lawrence as Mrs. A.*, Greystone. A husband's deeply appreciative account of the glamorous actress' later life shows the spirit of a talented, vital and courageous woman.
- Anderson, Erica, *World of Albert Schweitzer*, Harper. An inspiring biography in dramatic pictures and prose of the musician, doctor, theologian, reveals the life of a great man.
- Beach, Edward, *Run Silent, Run Deep*, Henry Holt. In a gripping novel of World War II submarine action, Commander Richardson and his crew seek revenge on a deadly Japanese sub-hunter.
- Bjorn, Thyra, *Papa's Wife*, Rinehart. An amusing chronicle of family life centered upon Papa Franzon, his wife and eight children, who came from Swedish Lapland to live in America.
- Bridgeman, William Barton and Jacqueline Hazard, *Lonely Sky*, Henry Holt. Moments of beauty and high excitement face the famous test pilot in his experimental jet plane.
- Brown, Christy, *My Left Foot*, Simon and Schuster. A Dublin boy crippled by cerebral palsy describes his remarkable battle for self-expression and belonging.
- Carson, Rachel, *Edge of the Sea*, with illustrations by Bob Hines, Houghton Mifflin. With scientific accuracy, charming style and beautiful pictures, this book describes the teeming life along the shores of the Atlantic.
- Chubb, Mary Alford, *Nefertiti Lived Here*, with illustrations by Ralph Lavers, Crowell. The world of Nefertiti comes to life for a young British woman who goes with an archaeological expedition to Tell el Amarna.
- Faralla, Dana, *Circle of Trees*, Lippincott. The wise wanderer, Reilly-O, brings magic and new hope to a Danish immigrant family living on the bleak Minnesota prairie.
- Forester, Cecil Scott, *Good Shepherd*, Little, Brown. The drama of an Allied convoy-escort commander's forty-eight hour battle against a submarine pack in the Atlantic.
- Keith, Agnes Newton, *Bare Feet in the Palace*, Little, Brown. Personal experience in the Philippines which gives a good picture of the place and the people, told with understanding and vitality.
- MacInnes, Helen, *Pray for a Brave Heart*, Harcourt, Brace. A young American in Switzerland outwits the enemies of democracy in this novel of international intrigue.
- Martini, Helen, *My Zoo Family*, Harper. The unique experience of the author as the foster mother to dozens of wild animal babies in the New York Bronx Zoo.
- Moody, Joseph and W. de Groot van Embden, *Arctic Doctor*, Dodd, Mead. A young Canadian doctor's account of his work in the East Arctic reveals the Eskimo way of life and the beauties of the North.



## WANTED: BROWSERS AND FUN READERS

MARION D. HARRIS, Librarian, Los Angeles City College

Enticing busy students in a junior college to read for pleasure, as well as for profit, is something which should be enthusiastically promoted by the library, especially during these times when recreational reading seems rapidly to be becoming a lost art.

Each school library has its own methods for developing an interest in reading among its students, but the basic principles are the same everywhere.

In an effort to stimulate interest in "reading for fun," the following article was presented in part, to the evening division students of Los Angeles City

College through their publication *Nite News*.

It is sincerely hoped that, through such an "advertisement" for the joys of recreational reading, while still in school, a habit will develop among many students, at least, which will give a lifetime of rewarding pleasure:

Everyone likes a bargain and we, in the library, feel that many students are missing out on some extraordinary values! There is a way to find them which takes little time and repays with interest. Proceed, therefore, to the Library. Wander in a leisurely fashion along the fascinating pathways of the book shelves. Dig deeply and enthusiastically for treasure trove in the card catalog. Discover for yourselves new worlds of adventure, beauty, and exciting information.

Take, for example, a subject like marriage. Believe it or not, the library shelves are filled with such bizarre marriages as *I Married a Boat*, *I Married a Dinosaur*, *I Married an Arab*, *I Married Adventure*, *We Married an Englishman*, *Marriage in Moderation*, *Marriage for One* and *Marriage is No Joke!*

Did you know that many valuable species of animal life have disappeared from the face of the earth during recent times? Take a look at *The Fall of the Sparrow*, by Jay Williams. He tells us some startling facts about conservation. The book is well illustrated, too.

Are you allergic? If so, you'll appreciate the valuable information in a book called, *Recipes and Menus for Allergics*, by Myra M. Haas.

Perhaps you're a garden fancier. If you are, glance through *The Secret of the Green Thumb*, by H. T. Northen, and

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Piersall, James Anthony and Albert Hirschberg, *Fear Strikes Out*, Little, Brown. Red Sox center fielder's own story of his mental breakdown and his struggle for recovery.

Ritchie, Jean, *Singing Family of the Cumberland*, Oxford. An American folk singer tells of growing up as the youngest member of a singing family in the Kentucky hills.

Shaw, Warren Wilbur, *Gentlemen, Start Your Engines*, Coward-McCann. Not only an autobiography of the late Indianapolis Motor Speedway Champion but also an informal history of auto racing in America.

Shor, Jean, *After You, Marco Polo*, McGraw-Hill. An entertaining, informative account of a gypsy trek across Asia following the ancient trail of Marco Polo.

Tenzing, Norgay, *Tiger of the Snows*, with James Ramsey Ullman, Putnam. A very stirring personal history of the famous Sherpa and the lifelong dream which led him to the top of Everest.

Wibberley, Leonard, *Mouse that Roared*, Little, Brown. An adroit and clever satire in which the Grand Ducky of Fenwick conquers the U. S. with twenty-three longbowmen, and saves the world from atomic destruction.

discover the road to success in gardening.

Do you feel gay and lighthearted when you think of mathematics? If you don't just leaf through the humorously illustrated book by Raymond Anderson, with the provocative title, *Romping Through Mathematics*. If you didn't know that mathematics can be fun, dip into *Mathematical Recreations and Essays*, by W. W. R. Ball. It's filled with intriguing magic squares, problems in bridge and chess.

Sports enthusiasts will find a wealth of up-to-date information on our library shelves. For instance, if you like to ski, you'll enjoy such breezy and informative books as: *Swing Into Skiing* and *Skiing Naturally*. If such activities are too strenuous, may be you'd just like to relax on a river, for example. Read about it in the entertaining, personalized true story of *Shantyboat*, by Harlan Hubbard.

Do you like to entertain guests but find yourself at a loss as to how to be a successful host or hostess? Look at *I Knew It All the Time*, by Healy. In it, you'll find out how to start your own quiz game and thereby give your guests a hilariously good time. Club entertainment chairmen, also, will be especially delighted with the nice assortment of books on games and other forms of entertainment which are to be found on the library shelves.

Perhaps you yearn to "break into print." You'll discover the methods and secrets of success if you read *Article Writing by Bird* or *Breaking Into Print* by Adler.

If you're a devotee of photography, perhaps you've wondered what the first photograph ever to be developed looked like. See *Photography: 1839-1937* and you'll be fascinated by the remarkable beauty and excellent technique of those early experiments in photography.

Did you know that Sir Winston Churchill once made a thrilling escape from captivity? Read about it and about others equally breathtaking in *The Book of Famous Escapes*, by Eric Williams.

After rambling among the book shelves, we invite you to delve into the mysterious recesses of the card catalog. Many an unsuspecting student has beheld its somewhat forbidding exterior with a mixture of awe and bewilderment. Its rugged appearance, however, belies its latent potentialities, for it is, indeed, a very mine of rich treasure! So, let us dig for a gold nugget or a bit of uranium.

For a beginning, we may follow the vein "I" and see what exciting possibilities we may uncover in: *I Begin Again*, *I Believe*, *I Believed*, *I Broke My Back on a Rosebud*, *I Came Out of the 18th Century*, *I Can't Breathe*, *I Can't Forget*, *I Feel Better Now*, *I Find My Vocation*, and *I Find the Missing*. It's hard to resist the very personal appeal of the rich ore represented here by these books which fairly cry out to make your acquaintance.

Follow another "lead." Try "We": *We*, *We Adopted a Daughter*, *We Adopted Three*, *We All Talk*, *We Always Lie to Strangers*, *We Are Not Alone*, *We Begin*, *We Call It Human Nature*, *We Can't All Be Thoroughbreds*, *We Chose the Islands*, *We Cover the World*, *We Fished All Night*, *We Followed Our Hearts to Hollywood*, *We Have Tomorrow*, *We In Captivity*, *We Lead a Double Life*, *We Live Again*, and *We Shared an Island*.

After the "appetizer," represented by our random ramblings, prepare for the feast of the imagination! Make actual contact for yourselves, therefore, with those living, breathing creations which live on library shelves and are called "books."

# ALA BASIC BOOKS

New editions of the American Library Association's widely used Basic Book Collections are now in preparation and will be published early in 1956, according to an announcement by the ALA Publishing Department.

The three titles are: *Basic Book Collection for Elementary Grades*, *Basic Book Collection for High Schools*, and *Basic Book Collection for Junior High Schools*.

The Elementary and High School books, first published by ALA in 1922 and 1924, respectively, will be sixth editions; the Junior High School book, first published in 1950, will be the second edition. The new editions of the Elementary and Junior High School books are expected to be published in the spring; the High School book in the summer.

Recognized as authoritative buying guides for the basic books for school libraries, the ALA Basic Book Collections are designed to fill the need of small and medium-sized schools which may not have the services of trained librarians. They are also used extensively in training classes for school librarians and by teachers and librarians in schools of all sizes.

All titles are in print at the time they are included in the collections. The Elementary and Junior High Collections include approximately 1,000 titles; the High School titles number about 1,500. With each title is given an annotation, author, publisher, date, price, Dewey Decimal Classification number, subject headings for the library catalog and the indication if printed cards are available from the H. W. Wilson Company. The High School titles include Library of Congress Card numbers.

In addition to the classified books, each of the ALA Basic Book Collections in-

clude recommended magazines prepared by the Magazine Evaluation Committee of the American Association of School Librarians, an ALA division. The High School book additionally will include "Selection Aids for Audio-Visual Materials."

In 1954, the AASL conducted a survey to determine the extent to which the ALA Basic Book Collections serve the purposes for which they were developed. It was found that they provide the basic list needed for first purchase for small libraries and the magazine and audio-visual guides were noted as especially valuable. It was found librarians also used the books to maintain a balanced collection in their libraries; to make reading lists; and as a guide in cataloging books. The survey emphasized the usefulness of the books for small libraries and their especial helpfulness when the library was conducted by a person without special training.

The ALA Basic Book Collections are each prepared by a subcommittee of librarians appointed by the ALA Editorial Committee from recommendations presented by AASL. The committees frequently have the advice of other librarians as well as the assistance of special consultants from these educational organizations: Association for Childhood Education International, National Council of Teachers of English, National Education Association (Department of Classroom Teachers); Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, and the National Council for the Social Studies. The subcommittee members and the consultants work to achieve a distribution of titles which meet the demands of reading interest and curriculum enrichment.

# JUST THE **FACTS** . . .

about

## School Library Consultant Services

### Why Are These Services Sought By Our Association?

1. School library service in California is ragged and uneven, ranging from superior to none. State leadership will work toward cohesion in school library practice, and toward improvement of school library service for all.

2. School library opportunities are desperately needed by children all over California. With some 1,000 children a month coming into our schools . . . !

3. Closer relationships are needed between teacher-training colleges and library schools for better preparation of teachers and librarians.

4. Much time is lost by administrators in searching for information and help with their school library program; selection of books; and school library building information. Why not have SCHOOL LIBRARY CONSULTANT SERVICES in the State Department of Education to whom they can write?

5. School librarians are at a loss for a source of information about other school libraries to use in evaluating their own library services, new methods, and current practices. SCHOOL LIBRARY CONSULTANT SERVICES in the Department of Education would provide a means of communication in regard to accepted practices, facts and figures on California's school library program.

6. California's leadership in education through the services of the State Department of Education is recognized nationally. SCHOOL LIBRARY CONSULTANT SERVICES will give this leadership further scope and greater influence. Many other states have such services; in this area, California lags behind.

7. The work of all school librarians will be encouraged through state-centered leadership representing the school library profession as a whole.

8. State recognition will attract more people into the library profession.

. . . . .

### Who Will Benefit From These Services?

Teachers . . . finding better organized library services to help them in their work.

Administrators . . . making efficient use of time with a central source of information.

Children . . . receiving an enriched curriculum and wider reading experiences.

Librarians . . . seeking professional help and encouragement.

Taxpayers . . . profiting from an efficiently operated and economically administered library program.

Everybody . . . benefiting from better schools!

. . . . .

**Remember . . . School Library Consultant Services will help everyone in education**

## How Will School Library Consultant Services Be Used?

All services from the State Department of Education are on a consultant basis. They may be requested at any time by school superintendents and administrators. Librarians may request services through their administrators or through direct communication for professional counsel.

Librarians . . . Have you talked with your administrator about the need for SCHOOL LIBRARY CONSULTANT SERVICES in the Department of Education? Point out ways in which such leadership will save him time and money in accurate information and economy of planning. Reassure him that such services will be services in action as well as in name, provided to help him with his school library program.

**DO YOU KNOW** your State Assemblers and Senators?

*Find out* in the following list who they are. **DO IT NOW.**

*Write to them*, or better still, *talk with them* if they live in your community. We're interested in them, because they represent us. Let them know our school library legislative needs!

*Get acquainted with them*, because you'll want to write to them later about library legislation. This will be the beginning of a beautiful friendship!

**ANY QUESTIONS?** Please send them to the EDITOR . . . for this is your page for keeping posted on SCHOOL LIBRARY CONSULTANT SERVICES.

**YOUR COMMITTEE.**

(Senate member from Monterey County not named because of vacancy)

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(Assemblyman from Monterey County is not listed because of vacancy)



## AVEAC - SLAC JOINT MEETING IN SACRAMENTO

"Communication Frontiers in Classroom and Community" was the theme when the Northern Section of the School Library Association of California met in cooperation with the Audio-Visual Education Association of California in Sacramento on February 3 and 4, 1956. This is the second cooperative meeting of these two associations, the first having been held in Santa Rosa two years ago. To judge from comments heard and overheard, many people hope that such a joint conference may be held often in the future.

Planning for the conference was characterized by cooperative effort from representatives of both associations in order to plan a conference of interest and value to the members of both associations.

Pre-Conference meetings were held on Thursday, February 2, for several special interest groups. One of these was the School Library Directors and Supervisors. Under the chairmanship of Mrs. Thelma Dahlin, a group of 35 librarians spent the afternoon discussing such problems as *Procedures for Involving Teachers and Administrators in Library Programs*, *Book Selection Policies*, *The Librarian's Role in In-Service and Teacher Education*, and *Purchasing*. A preliminary interest survey had indicated that these topics were of first interest to the greatest number of people. However, as it seems happens whenever a group of school librarians get together, discussion turned for a while to our needs for school library consultant service at the State level. The need for immediate action toward this goal was stressed and several suggestions offered; among them, the idea that the School Library Association should hold a workshop on legislation and public relations in order that the whole group might work more effectively toward achieving this service which is so sorely needed.

As usual, there just were not enough minutes in the hours, so arrangements were made for those interested to get together again on Friday to discuss more problems suggested by the participants of the group.

Many librarians attended the dinner that night for which the program was arranged by the Bureau of Audio-Visual Education, State Department of Education. Remarks by George Hogan, Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Department of Education, were enjoyed by all. It was at this meeting that announcement was made of Francis Noel's leave of absence for a year to work in Europe, with headquarters in Paris. George Ormsby, who will be the Acting Bureau Chief during Dr. Noel's absence, presented a talk on *What We Stand For in the Year Ahead*.

The Conference opened Friday morning with Elsie Holland, President of the Northern Section, S.L.A.C., presiding. Everyone was disappointed not to have the opportunity of hearing The Honorable Donald D. Doyle, Chairman of the Assembly Education Committee, who was scheduled to give the general session address that morning, but who was ill in the hospital. However, as T. R. Smedberg, Superintendent of Schools, Sacramento County, said in his welcome and introduction, we are fortunate indeed to have such able "pinch-hitters" as the panel which substituted. This panel, under the leadership of William H. Allen, Associate Professor of Cinema and Education, University of Southern California, presented the topic *Automation in Modern Education—What Does It Mean?* If James D. Finn, Associate Professor of Education, University of Southern California, answered this question accurately, we will soon be offering library services to students whose teachers appear to them

only on television screens. Although Dr. Finn probably sees librarians and libraries becoming extinct as rapidly as he forecasts the disappearance of teachers and supervisors, some of us suspect that if such methods of teaching as he describes become a reality, it will increase the need for library services as students will have even greater needs to do individual reading and research.

Of the three section meetings following the general session and continuing in the afternoon, the one of most interest and significance to librarians was, *Legislation Affecting Audio-Visual Education and Library Services in California: Old, New, and Needed*. The panel presentation was arranged and chaired by Ida May Edwards, and included presentations by two other members of S.L.A.C., Charlotte Davis and Jewell Gardiner; Elsie Holland served as one of the resource consultants. George Hogan's presentation on *How to Initiate a Law and How Legislation is Checked—and Implications of Needed Laws* was of special interest. In addition, Dr. Hogan had had prepared a reprint of the provisions of the Education Code specifically relating to Audio-Visual Education and School Libraries and Library Services. This reprint is a very handy thing to have around in any library.

The luncheon and A.V.E.A.C. business meeting was high-lighted by group singing led by Marion Jordalen, Music Consultant, Sacramento County Schools. Featured were parodies of popular songs such as this:

THE MORE WE GET TOGETHER  
(To tune of "Ach Du Lieber Augustin")

We like to get together  
Regardless of the weather.

We like to meet together  
At meetings like this,

We're A-V-E-A-C  
And S-L-A-C

We like to get together  
At meetings like this.

We learn from able speakers  
In our general sessions

From section meetings also  
We get the good word.

At luncheons and banquet  
Demonstrations, exhibits

We gather good ideas  
Then homeward we go.

Glenn R. Thompson, President of A.V.E.A.C., presided at the second general session on Saturday morning. William J. Burkhardt, Superintendent of Schools, Sacramento City Schools, welcomed the conference. "*And the Walls Came Tumbling Down*" was the provocative title Paul R. Hanna, Lee Jacks Professor of Child Education, Stanford University, gave to his address, which was the chief feature of the morning session. Dr. Hanna emphasized the changes which have come about by mass communication and the great responsibility held by those who choose the subject matter for communication media.

Concluding the Conference was a luncheon meeting for which the Northern Section made arrangements. Following greetings by Miss Ruth Dodds, Director of Curriculum, Sacramento County Schools, Mrs. Jane Hood, Assistant to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, State Department of Education, spoke on the recent White House Conference as an experiment in communication. Mrs. Hood's address was a real demonstration of communication between a speaker and a group. Following the program, a short business meeting of the Northern Section was held.

MILDRED BRACKETT,  
Co-Chairman, Conference Program  
Committee.



## U.S.F. WORKSHOP ON THE LIBRARY — THE HEART OF THE READING PROGRAM

### *Purpose and Nature of the Workshop*

—This workshop is planned to give teachers and librarians an opportunity to discuss and propose ways and means of improving the reading program in every school through an enriched understanding and increased use of library resources. Following the pattern of the last two workshops each day will be devoted to one aspect of reading under the direction of guest lecturers who are experts in the subject under discussion.

### GLADYS WAIVE STAGER

The library profession has lost a valuable member by the death last December of Gladys Waive Stager. Waive Stager, librarian of the Bakersfield City Schools since 1942, was an active member of the School Library Association of California, serving one year as secretary and one year as business manager of the Bulletin. She was also active in the California Library Association and the ALA. She was an enthusiastic member of the profession, always willing to participate and to assume her share of the responsibilities.

Those who met her casually in the last year of her life had no thought that she was fighting her own private battle against cancer. She did not give up her interest in the future for which she continued to plan nor her enthusiasm for her day to day activities. Several times she returned to her desk after a bout with X-ray or other treatment but would never allow her companions to treat her as an invalid.

Waive had many artistic interests, had been an art major in college, created original silver jewelry and enamel-on-copper work and was an enthusiastic camera fan with many beautiful colored slides to her credit. She loved to garden, enjoyed to the full travelling either far or near and was a good companion to her many friends.

The workshop will be of value to both elementary and secondary-school teachers and librarians.

*Workshop Director*—The University of San Francisco is happy to announce that *Miss Margaret V. Girdner*, Director, Bureau of Texts and Libraries, San Francisco Unified School District has graciously consented again to direct another library workshop on the campus assisted by *Sister Mary Alma, P.B.V.M.* Miss Girdner has engaged *Dr. Richard Hurley* from the Department of Library Science, Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. to assist her as consultant for the entire two weeks of the workshop. Among the lecturers already engaged is *Dr. Frank Baxter*, Professor of the University of Southern California and noted Shakespearean scholar.

*Admission and Credit*—Because of limited facilities in the library the enrollment this year will be limited.

Education 299. "The Library — The Heart of the Reading Program" (3) will commence on the morning of June 25 and extend to July 6 (9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.) daily. From 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 m. there will be general sessions. From 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. the sessions will be divided into three seminar groups: elementary; junior high; secondary.

Education 299.1. "Directed Study in Reading Problems" (4) will enable the teacher and librarian to work on basic reading problems in their own teaching field. This course will be open only to students registered for Education 299.

*Dates and Fees*—The workshop will be conducted from June 25 through July 6 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Fees for Education 299 and Education 299.1 will be as follows:

Registration Fee .....	\$ 3.00
Education 299 .....	36.00 (3 units)
Education 299.1 .....	48.00 (4 units)

## SAN JOSE SLANC CONFERENCE: APRIL 14, 1956

SLANC will hold its first annual meeting this month since its foundation almost a year ago.

Sherry Kelly, president of SLANC, and a student at Campbell High School, has announced in the second Newsletter the tentative program to be presented at San Jose State College, April 14, 1956.

- 9-10 Registration and Time for Snacks (10c or 15c)
- 10-11 General Session  
 Sherry Kelly, President of SLANC, presiding  
 Greetings—Dr. Walquist, President of S.J.S.C.  
 Remarks—Miss Jessie Boyd  
 Guest Speaker—Mrs. Marion H. Garthwaite—"Meet the Author"
- 11-12 GROUP MEETINGS
- Senior High—  
 Mrs. Carma Zimmerman, State Librarian, Speaker  
 Miss Vera Ann Swoboda—Seminar and Discussion
- Junior High—  
 Dramatization—"What, How, and Who"  
 An Interview—"Do It Yourself"  
 Miss Barbara Bent—The Story  
 Miss Edith Titcomb—Leader
- Elementary—  
 Chip Costello, Moreland School, presiding  
 Mrs. Frances Ray—Leader  
 Panel—Mrs. Frances Erickson, Lora Lee Topping, Arthur Ingraham, Doreen O'Donnell.
- Puppet Show—  
 Mrs. Virginia Taylor

Audio-Visual Operators—Dr. Richard Lewis in Charge

Introduction—"Audio-Visual Today—Automation Tomorrow"

Presentation—"Keep It Running; Care of Equipment"—R. A. Litke, S.J.S.C.

12:15-1:30 LUNCH, not to exceed \$1.00—Dancing in Women's Gym

1:30-3:00 SLANC SESSION

Sherry Kelly, presiding

Esther Firth and Muriel Carson—Leaders

Business

Nomination Skits—Al Breakwell, M. C.

Election

New Officers—Dismissal

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## **LOS ANGELES CAREER CONFERENCE: APRIL 14, 1956**

The Southern Section of the School Library Association of California will sponsor a career conference at the University of Southern California on Saturday, April 14, 1956. Each member of SLAC is invited to bring students interested in entering the library profession. Recruitment chairmen from most of the library organizations in the region have cooperated to make the day a success.

A light snack will be served at 9:30 a.m. in the USC Doheny Library patio, by the Social Committee, after which the entire contingent of students will meet in Hancock Auditorium for the general session. Under the chairmanship of Aina Abrahamson, Chairman of the Professional Committee, speakers representing various types of library service will present short summaries of their particular jobs. Bill Eshelman, Assistant Librarian at Los Angeles State College, will serve as general moderator to discuss the position of the librarian in today's society.

After a short break, the assembly will be divided into small groups by grade level, from elementary to college, and will adjourn to smaller rooms where informal question-and-answer sessions can take place. President at each of the smaller groups will be a member of the Professional Committee to act as chairman and three or more resource persons from libraries in the vicinity.

The conference will be over shortly after noon so that those traveling long distances will be able to arrive home at a convenient hour. The Professional Committee hopes that each of you will make every effort to bring those of your students that might be interested in pursuing library work, for it is a rare opportunity to have at one time and place outstanding representatives from the libraries in the region to help counsel your students.

## **SUMMER SCHOOL NOTES U.C. SCHOOL OF LIBRARIANSHIP**

The School of Librarianship on the Berkeley campus, University of California, will offer courses during both of the 1956 Summer Sessions, from June 18 to July 28, and from July 30 to September 8, respectively, Dean J. Periam Danton announced today.

During the first session courses will be given in "Bibliography and Reference Materials," "School Library Administration," and "Library Work with Children." Librarians Robert G. Sumpter, Capuchino High School, San Mateo, and Leone Garvey, supervisor, boys and girls department of the Berkeley Public Library, will join the first Summer Sessions staff as visiting faculty members.

Courses to be given during the second Summer Session include the following: "Selection and Acquisition of Library Materials"; "Special problems in the Selection of Materials and the Evaluation of Collections"; "Municipal and County Library Administration" and "Reference and Government Publications."

Regular faculty members LeRoy C. Merritt and Edward A. Wight, professors of librarianship, and Louis D. Sass, assistant professor, will comprise the second session teaching staff.

All courses are part of the School's regular program for the Master of Library Science degree, which may be completed by students enrolling for three to four full summers of study. Admission requirements for the Summer Sessions in the School of Librarianship are the same as for the regular sessions as noted in the School's announcement.

Students planning to enter for the first time must apply in advance to both the Graduate Division and the Summer Sessions Office, as well as to the School of Librarianship. Applications forms may be secured from the respective offices.

## IMMACULATE HEART COLLEGE SUMMER SCHOOL

The Graduate Department of Library Science at Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles will sponsor an institute for public and school librarians and teachers to be held from June 17th to June 24th. The general areas to be studied are book selection for children and young people, librarian - teacher - community relations, reading guidance for the exceptional child, and the effective use of mass communication media. Since these areas will be handled in the democratic spirit of a workshop, they might be altered or expanded to suit the needs of the participants. However, these topics should enable the three groups working with children and young people to work out their mutual problems and to arrive at a better understanding of problems in their own fields.

The institute will be under the direction of Dr. Frances Henne, Associate Professor of Library Service at Columbia University, who will be assisted by Dr. Hazel Pulling, Miss Jasmine Britton and other members of the faculty of the Library Science Department.

According to the plan, there will be a general session each morning with a guest speaker, followed by coffee and conversation before breaking up into discussion groups. In the afternoon there will be other discussions groups, and at the close of the day time will be allowed for a resume of each group's work and further independent study.

The institute will carry two units of credit but is also open to auditors who have had some related experience. The full program will be available upon request. For further information write to the Director, Graduate Department of Library Science, Immaculate Heart College, 2070 East Live Oak Drive, Los Angeles 28, California.

## FELLOWSHIPS FOR CHILDREN'S AND SCHOOL LIBRARIANS

Continuing its generous contributions of the past three years, the California Congress of Parents and Teachers is offering for the academic year 1956-57 two fellowships of \$750 each for students preparing for work with children in the PUBLIC SCHOOL or PUBLIC LIBRARY systems in the state of California. While the recipients of the awards need not be California residents, the successful applicants must agree to spend two years following graduation working with children in California libraries.

One fellowship is available at each of the two accredited library schools in the State—the University of California, Berkeley, and the University of Southern California, Los Angeles.

Admission requirements at each school include graduation with a Bachelor's degree from an approved college or university, a strong scholastic record, special interest in, and qualifications for library work with children and young people.

Interested candidates should write at once for application blanks and detailed admission requirements to the Library School they prefer.

J. PERIAM DANTON, Dean  
School of Librarianship  
University of California  
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